



From the Superintendent

Kevin M. MacDonald

A warm welcome to all of our students who will be returning on September 8th for what I anticipate will be a fantastic school year. I hope this sensational summer has provided everyone some time to relax and re-energize. I'm sure for many parents the return to the structure of school is a welcome change!

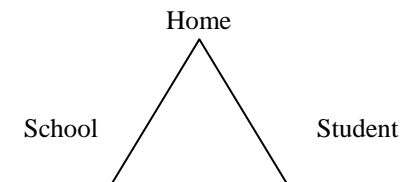
This summer has proven to be very busy. We did have quite a few retirements last year and have replaced some of the positions with new faces that you may see around the district. Inside this newsletter you can read more about our new staff. We are excited for them to join the Roy-Hart family and look for great things from all of our new hires.

Academically, the most significant change is the State Education Department's decision to implement new scoring criteria for the 3-8 ELA and Mathematics assessments. While we are in the process of studying the data in order to make necessary adjustments, it is clear that the bar has been raised and Roy-Hart has its work cut out. We intend to raise our achievement levels to meet and exceed that bar. I would like to caution you regarding media reports that "students did poorly" on the 2009-2010 assessments as that is not necessarily true. It is important to note that the students were assessed in May 2010 and at that time the "cut scores" had not

changed. In July, the Board of Regents endorsed the rationale presented by Commissioner Steiner to adjust the "cut scores" on these assessments based on research that clearly suggests the need to more accurately indicate "proficiency" on these exams. Royalton Hartland did nearly as well or better on the 3-8 ELA and Mathematics assessments compared to all public schools in New York State.

As we plan for our future it has become evident and important to me that we consider the needs and aspirations of each of our students. Success in school can be defined in many ways, and I believe the more opportunities we provide children to experience success the more engaged they become in their education. For some, that might mean graduating high school with honors and attending a four year college. For others, attending a Career and Technical Program and entering the workforce following graduation. My point is that we do have some flexibility in our system that can allow for success at a variety of levels, which in the end produces a citizen that is a productive member of society and a contributor to the American economy. I think this is an important conversation to have with your son/daughter as they move through middle school and into high school. Listen to their vision of success and help guide them so they truly benefit from their school experience. The key to successful and enjoyable school years is

the partnerships between school, students, and home. The pyramid below can be used to represent this relationship. It is symbolic in that a pyramid allows for maximum structural loading giving maximum internal space. No other engineering structure allows for this combination and flexibility. We need the ability to lean on each other, yet be flexible to assist our students in meeting their goals.



I look forward to being part of this pyramid and I encourage you to be involved and interested in what your son/daughter is doing at school. Please accept my sincere wishes for an enjoyable and productive school year!

Kevin M. MacDonald
Superintendent of Schools